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ENCORE

ENVIRONMENT AND COASTAL RESOURCES PROJECT

THE ENCORE EXPERIENCE: LESSONS LEARNED TO DATE

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ENCORE

ENVIRONMENT AND COASTAL RESOURCES PROJECT

ENCORE is a regional conservation and development project in the Eastern Caribbean (EC) targeting the Marine Biome. Its purpose is to demonstrate that the collaboration between public, private and community interests can protect the natural resource base and enhance biodiversity conservation, while promoting viable economic development. It focuses on sustainable use and capacity building, but incorporates as well elements of pollution prevention and treaties and legislation.

The Project's overall goal is to foster sound environmental management in the Eastern Caribbean through a partnership of regional and national agencies, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, and the private sector

Funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and managed by World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the Project is implemented through a Regional Environmental Management Component and a Local Site Management Component with the Technical Assistance support of WWF.

Regional Environmental Management

Natural Resources Management Unit of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States-OECS-NRMU To increase the capacity of the institutions in the Eastern Caribbean countries to address environmental issues and increase the public awareness of the relationship between natural resources conservation and sustainable economic development.

Caribbean Environmental Health Institute-CEHI To improve the region's capacity to monitor (a) the changing status of key natural resources, especially water, and (b) the trends in environmental degradation.

Local Site Management

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Environment of Dominica and Ministry of Planning, Development and Environment of St. Lucia To demonstrate the value of an integrated management approach to natural resource conservation and development, and to strengthen the capacity of relevant stakeholders for the sound management of selected terrestrial and marine ecosystems, as well as for the monitoring of natural resources management activities.

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THE ENCORE EXPERIENCE LESSONS LEARNED TO DATE

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SUMMARY OF LESSONS LEARNED TO DATE

THEME 1 PROJECT DESIGN AND PLANNING

- *The Value of Participatory Planning* Active participation of beneficiaries and implementors in project design provides for better definition of the problems and issues, and for a factual articulation of the long-term project goal
- *Avoid Unrealistic Expectations* Projects involving multi-stakeholder collaboration need to include mechanisms to avoid raising unrealistic expectations
- *The Value of Monitoring* Natural resources management projects with built-in mechanism for monitoring and adjusting activities during implementation improve their chances of success

THEME 2 STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP

- *There is No Prescription for Partnerships* Dedication and flexibility are keys to effective collaboration and partnership building
- *Partnerships Take Time* Multiple stakeholder partnerships take time to develop and are most effective when built upon a common agenda, good communication and mutual trust
- *Inter-Agency Collaboration is challenging* Promoting inter-agency collaboration is challenging, but essential to sound environmental management

THEME 3 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

- *“Real” Community Participation* Promoting “real” community participation in environmental management is time-consuming and requires commitment, patience and skill
- *Moving From Dependency to Self-Help* Significant effort is needed to assist local communities to move from a “dependency mentality” to a self-help orientation
- *The Legal Framework* The success of community participation in natural resources management depends significantly on the existence of the appropriate legal framework

THEME 4 CAPACITY BUILDING

- *Needs Assessment* A needs assessment at the initial stage ensures that the program responds to the specific needs of the beneficiaries

- *Monitoring Project Impacts* Impact monitoring is an essential component of capacity building
- *Experiential Learning* Learning from peer's experiences is among the most effective tools for capacity building

THEME 5 POLICY FRAMEWORKS AND GUIDELINES

- *Policy Formulation* Consultations among policy makers, technocrats and other stakeholder groups are the best foundation for the formulation of sound policy, guidelines and regulations
- *Public Awareness Campaigns* Well-targeted Public Awareness Campaigns are an important element in the formulation and subsequent endorsement of policy framework, guidelines and regulations

THEME 6 ADOPTION OF IMPROVED NRM PRACTICES

- *Participation of Target Groups* Participation of the target groups in the development of guidelines, management plans, etc is essential to their adoption
- *Empowerment of Target Groups* Effective adoption of guidelines, management plans, etc lies extensively on the empowerment of the target groups
- *Local Economic Benefits* Adoption of improved natural resource management practices is more likely to occur if the activity generates economic benefits for local communities

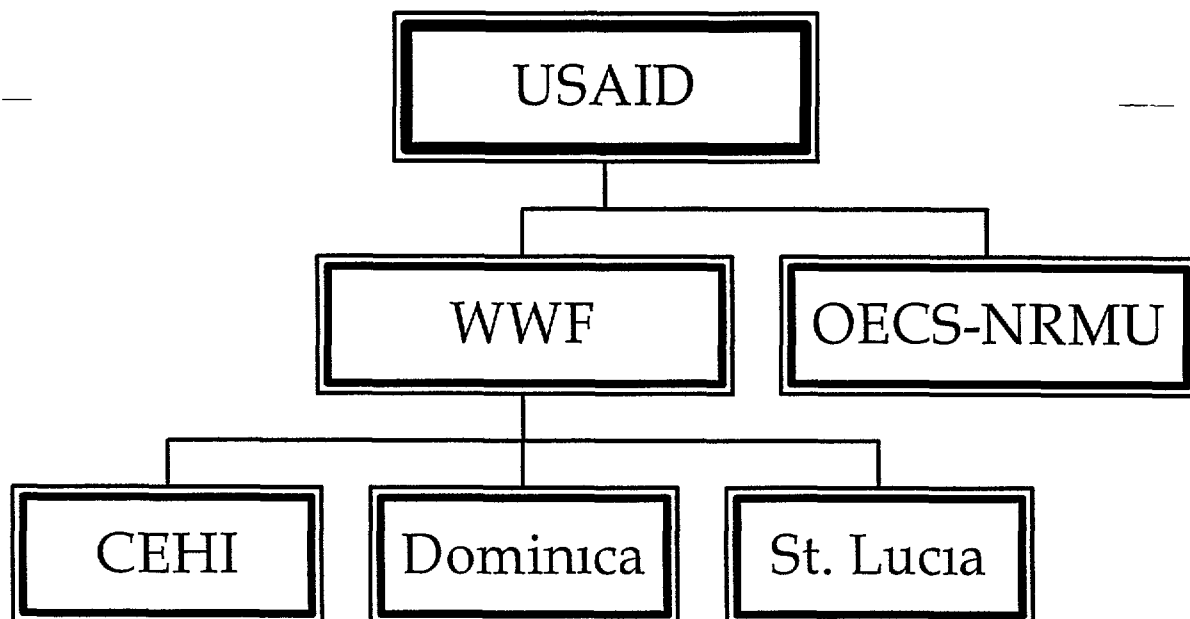
THE ENCORE EXPERIENCE. LESSONS LEARNED TO DATE

OVERVIEW

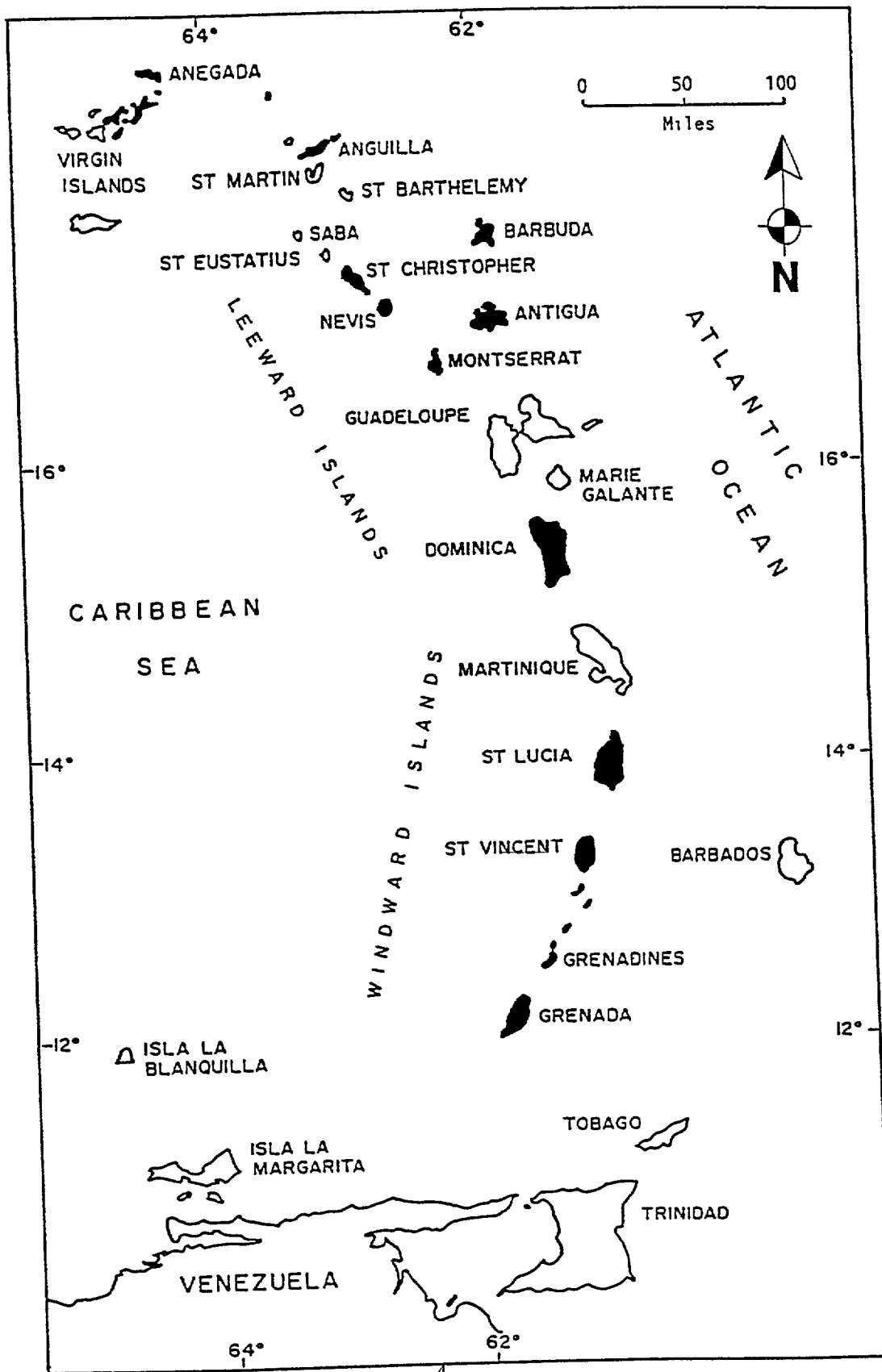
The ENCORE project is designed around the premise that small island states are special cases in economic development planning because the structure and function of their ecosystems are intimately linked to neighboring ones as well as to the small size and co-dependency of their national economies. The economic development of any single island, therefore, must be viewed in the context of larger, integrated approaches whose economic, demographic, socio-political, and environmental elements are interlinked. Working with these assumptions, ENCORE confronts some of the fundamental challenges to the viability of the region as a cluster of sustainable natural resource-based economies, such as tourism, land-based pollution, agriculture policies, and coastal zone development.

It is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through a Project Agreement with the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States and a Cooperative Agreement with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). In turn, WWF provides sub-grants to CEHI, the Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica and the Government of St. Lucia. In addition to the provision of Technical Assistance, WWF is responsible for ensuring (a) the sound management and smooth implementation of its sub-grantees' Project activities, and (b) their compliance with the terms of their respective Project Agreements as well as with relevant USAID-WWF Guidelines, policies and procedures.

Schematic Implementation Structure



Map of the Eastern Caribbean showing the OECS Member States



THE LESSONS LEARNED PROCESS

ENCORE has contributed and is still contributing to notable results in the conservation and management of fragile terrestrial and coastal ecosystems, the development of nature/heritage tourism, environmental monitoring, public awareness and the strengthening of institutional capability. Nevertheless, ENCORE's most important legacy may very well be the implementation insights garnered from hard won experience that reflect the lessons learned from project achievements and disappointments. The search for best practices and lessons learned (effective planning processes, strategies, implementation techniques, policies and information management systems) is worldwide, so ENCORE is well positioned to contribute to the global knowledge building effort.

This assessment of the Lessons Learned To Date from the ENCORE experience is the result of a) a series of consultations, workshops and meetings facilitated by the authors and held by the ENCORE Project partners (CEHI, OECS-NRMU, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Environment of the Commonwealth of Dominica, Ministry of Planning, Development and Environment of St. Lucia, USAID and WWF), b) various interviews and meetings held with key collaborating agencies, community groups and beneficiaries such as the St. Lucia National Trust, the St. Lucia Tourist Board, the Soufriere Foundation, the administration of the Soufriere Marine Management Area, the community of Belvedere, the St. Lucia Department of Forestry, the St. Lucia Department of Fisheries, the Forestry Division of Dominica, the Dominica Department of Fisheries, the National Development Corporation, the Portsmouth Indian River Tour Guide Association, the Produce Chemistry Laboratory, the Fisheries Study Group, etc., and c) the review of key project technical and progress reports. This assessment allowed the identification of project successes and disappointments, and gathered insights as to why. It paid special attention to the "process" that led to key project achievements. The series of case-studies highlights this dimension of project activities. This modest set of lessons learned and/or principles reinforced expresses the collective wisdom of the ENCORE group on some of the important factors contributing to successful initiatives on behalf of ecoregion conservation and community-based natural resources management.

The first series of consultations led to the selection of a preliminary list of thematic areas to focus the lessons learned exercise. During the process, the list was reviewed and further revised to encompass the six (6) themes covered in this document. Although these themes are interlinked, attempts have been made to develop each of them in such a way that the reader may pull and use the sections most relevant to his/her interest or work.

The six themes are

- Project Design and Planning
- Stakeholder Collaboration and Partnership
- Community Participation
- Capacity Building
- Policy Frameworks and Guidelines
- Adoption of Improved NRM Practices

THEME 1: PROJECT DESIGN AND PLANNING

The successful implementation of a project starts at its planning and design stage. ENCORE, like all other projects, falls under the same rule. The designers' degree of understanding and interpretation of the issues at stake play an important role in the whole process. At the same time, their degree of understanding of the issues depends significantly on the project's point of origin.

When a project originates from the direct beneficiaries (those who will benefit directly from project activity), the problems to be addressed are defined and articulated according to their understanding of their own situation and needs. As a result however, it may fall short of meeting the objective and program of the funding agencies. Alternatively, when it originates outside of the target areas, it is very likely to reflect the mission of the external organization as well as its own perception of the needs of the beneficiaries. Consciously building-in the opportunity for active collaboration among the major stakeholder groups (beneficiaries, implementing, executing and funding institutions) during the planning and design process is critical to ensure that the real needs and priorities of the beneficiaries, as well as the mission of the implementing and funding institutions, are taken into consideration and reconciled.

The ENCORE experience has once again demonstrated the value of participatory planning. A true understanding of the ecological, socio-economic, institutional and historical context of the beneficiaries and target locations is a vital element for the design of practical and sustainable projects. Community development and conservation practitioners have long argued that participatory planning leads to projects which are built on existing knowledge, institutional structures and local capacity. This, in turn, generates more active community involvement during implementation, contributes to building the capacity of local institutions and organizations, and results in activities that are more likely to be sustained.

THE DESIGN OF ENCORE

ENCORE is the result of a USAID-led mission in 1990. It was designed to increase the level of awareness of people and governments in the region of the causes and consequences of environmental degradation, and to enhance their ability to use the region's natural resources in economically productive and sustainable ways. The two project components (REM and LSM) were to be mutually supportive, with lessons learned in local site activities shared regularly with other OECS countries through the network of regional activities, and lessons learned from the REM activities applied to the LSM's. The LSM activities were to provide the analytical basis for guiding and informing the REM, allowing the other OECS Member States ample opportunities to examine them, observe the lessons learned and adapt them to their specific situations. In general, the designers expected that by the end of the project, public knowledge, support and participation of local communities in maintaining the region natural resource base for sustainable economic development would be increasing.

The project has significantly changed from this original design. Numerous lessons were learned during its implementation, and many experiences accumulated in similar projects in other parts of the world were confirmed. Hopefully, other institutions, agencies and communities involved in the design and development of community-based natural resources management projects can benefit from these lessons.

LESSONS LEARNED AND/OR PRINCIPLES REINFORCED

***1 The Value of Participatory Planning* Active participation of beneficiaries and implementors in project design provides for better definition of the problems and issues, and for a factual articulation of the long-term project goal**

The implementation of the ENCORE project was extremely challenging due to a series of oversights during the project design caused by inadequate understandings of the social, economic, political, institutional and biophysical context of the target areas. The project was based on several unrealistic assumptions, especially regarding regional, national and local capacity for its implementation.

For example, the designers assumed that the NRMU had the capacity to oversee a project of this magnitude and at the same time implement the regional component. However, at that time, the NRMU was only a five-year old organization with a very small staff. It had been working in collaboration with the German Agency for Technical Assistance (GTZ) on the testing and implementation of various environmental techniques including Geographic Information Systems. At the time of signing the Project Agreement, ENCORE was the largest bi-lateral program in the Eastern Caribbean. Neither the OECS Secretariat nor the NRMU had any direct involvement with the private sector or the NGO community as required by the Project. Therefore, meeting the USAID program and financial management requirements tested the mettle of the NRMU which did not, as yet, have the institutional capacity to take on such responsibility. This resulted in numerous and lengthy implementation delays, as USAID compliance issues were resolved, which in turn caused tension between NRMU and the Local Site Management. However, while it was a struggle to manage the project, over the years the experience has served to strengthen the capacity of the NRMU. ENCORE has widened the clientele of the NRMU to include the private sector, the NGO and CBO community. The OECS-NRMU now plays a more pro-active role in proposal development, project design and implementation.

Another inaccurate assumption related to the capacity at the Local Sites. The design pre-supposed the existence of a level of community organizations that could engage in partnerships with government and the private sector to implement the project activities. However, while there were a few NGOs, the majority of the existing groups comprised church and sports groups and other service clubs, many of which were non-functional. In fact, none of the Local Sites had significant community-based organizations that were ready for partnerships with government. Historically, the Caribbean public is accustomed to the Government's taking responsibility for the design and implementation of projects. Participatory approaches to development were at that time still in their infancy in the region. Had the community been involved in the project design, this lack of capacity would have most likely been identified and addressed.

Rectifying Project design flaws delayed the implementation of several project activities so that the necessary assessments could be undertaken. The more comprehensive assessments undertaken by the Project Implementors¹ led to significant revisions in the original logical framework in order to establish objectives and performance monitoring indicators which would better capture project accomplishments. Fortunately the funding agency, USAID, was supportive of the need to make modifications to the Project.

The value of participatory planning is underscored by the success of the Water Quality Monitoring Program which was designed by the implementors and the beneficiaries together, with inputs from the funding and the managing institutions. It is a good example of how to avoid some of the design flaws described above. In this instance full contextual analysis was undertaken prior to implementation (Case Study No. 1).

2 *Avoid Unrealistic Expectations* Projects involving multi-stakeholder collaboration need to include mechanisms to avoid raising unrealistic expectations

An important aspect of project implementation is ensuring that all of the stakeholders -- funding agency, project staff and host communities -- share a common understanding of the project's goals and objectives. Conflicting interpretations of these can lead to unrealistic expectations. This occurred in the ENCORE project at the local sites and at the national level. There were occasions when interpretation of the Project Document differed between the implementing institutions and USAID or even among the implementing institutions themselves.

Prior to ENCORE, small villages such as Scotts Head in Dominica were often targeted by the relief and development agencies for relief assistance, infrastructural development and direct aid intervention. In Scotts Head, for example, just a few years before the initiation of ENCORE, the residents had received financial assistance from USAID to rebuild their homes after the destructive passage of a hurricane. Therefore, when they heard about ENCORE being funded by USAID, they automatically assumed that money would once again be available for public work-type activities. This was not the case. During the first series of consultations held by the implementors to identify and develop the project activities, the community members identified and proposed only infrastructure development project activities, most of which did not fall under ENCORE's purview. This misunderstanding created some friction at the beginning.

¹ In this document, the term Project Implementors is used in its broader sense to include CEHI, OECS-NRMU, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and the Environment of Dominica, Ministry of Planning and Environment of St. Lucia and World Wildlife Fund. Through its technical assistance role (long and short-term), WWF is an integral member of the implementation team.

CASE STUDY No. 1
DESIGN OF THE WATER QUALITY MONITORING PROGRAM

The Water Quality Monitoring Program aims at ensuring "that governments, private sector entities and communities have understandable and usable drinking, coastal, surface and ground water quality information at hand on a continuous basis, for use in determining the safety of these resources for human and environmental health." Implemented by the Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (CEHI), this program is a good example of sound planning and participatory design. Initiated more than one year after the other elements of the ENCORE Project, it wisely learned from their experiences

This program set out to, and is being successful in, improving the region's ability to monitor water quality. The implementors used a logical process of design and planning: 1) they worked with the regional Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of the OECS-NRMU to develop a priority listing of areas for environmental monitoring, 2) they conducted a series of national consultations based on the priority areas to identify the first priority and assess individual country's needs and requirements for environmental monitoring. Water quality monitoring emerged as first priority; 3) they elaborated the framework for collaboration with governmental, non-governmental and community-based organizations for the implementation of the Program, and 4) they held a Logical Framework workshop to design the Program and identify the necessary benchmarks for the monitoring and assessment of the Program.

Through this Program, to date, all of the eight OECS Member States have established new water quality monitoring initiatives and have dedicated additional staff time and budgetary resources to water quality monitoring. All the national water quality laboratories are (or will soon be) fully equipped with the necessary basic equipment, materials and human resources to implement the monitoring program. CEHI has trained the relevant staff in the use of this equipment. It continues to assist them in the development of national water quality data banks which will be linked with the regional databanks being established at CEHI headquarters. The Program was also linked into the LSM component through the conduct of water quality monitoring activities at identified locations within the Local Sites in Dominica and St. Lucia.

Hailed as one of the successes of the ENCORE Project, in the 1996 Evaluation, it was noted that

"CEHI has used its modest grant award well and has achieved good results in strengthening water quality monitoring capacity given the short time their program has been underway. The two person team is well organized and has achieved a significant part of their objectives related to evaluating the island's water monitoring capabilities, training, lab upgrading and development of Caribbean water quality guidelines."

CASE STUDY No. 1 (continue)
DESIGN OF THE WATER QUALITY MONITORING PROGRAM

What factors contributed to the successful implementation of the Water Quality Monitoring Program?

- Designing of the Program with the active participation of all the main partners to ensure that the real needs and priorities of the beneficiaries, as well as the objectives of the regional implementing agency and the external funding agency were taken into consideration.
- Conduct of national consultations for contextual analysis and good understand of the nature of the ecological, socio-economic, institutional and historical issues which would have impacted on or would be impacted by the Program
- Assessment of the capacity of the collaborating organizations so that the design reflects the various national circumstances.
- Targeting of well defined institutions - national laboratories- as opposed to more nebulous groups.
- Development of monitoring benchmarks and indicators with active participation of the beneficiaries.

The active participation of the local stakeholders in project activities identification and development is one of the healthiest approaches in development projects. However, **as the ENCORE experience shows, the beneficiaries and counterparts must first understand, agree to, and accept the project goals, objectives and guidelines**. It took the ENCORE staff more than a year of hard work and the support and understanding of USAID to address this problem and gradually develop the necessary partnerships through consultation, dialogue, awareness raising and capacity building. Unfortunately this obstacle was never fully surmounted in Scotts Head, Dominica. During the initial stage, the staff focused its efforts on facilitating the community's understanding of ENCORE's goal, objectives and frameworks, as well as USAID's appreciation for the local realities and basic needs. It subsequently succeeded in creating a balance between the project objectives and the communities's needs.

3 *The Value of Monitoring* Natural resources management projects with built-in mechanism for monitoring and adjusting activities during implementation improve their chances of success

Natural Resources Management projects, especially those with community participation, need to include mechanisms for the incorporation of feedback from local consultations and for the assessment of community participation. As originally conceived, **ENCORE did not include any formal**

structure for mid-course adjustments Fortunately, the implementors succeeded in negotiating with the funding agency the inclusion of activities which responded to priorities identified by the beneficiaries. For example, the implementation of activities such as management and protection of some of the fragile or natural sites stalled because the local communities had other basic priorities. They identified, as their immediate priority, the need for basic sanitary infrastructure for the management and disposal of domestic and human wastes. Initially, however, this was not within the frame of the Project – though it desperately needed to be in order to nurture community involvement with the Project. The implementation team concluded that these basic needs should be addressed before the local communities could move to higher level objectives such as sound environmental management.

Project alienation by the beneficiaries was avoided because

- The project staff worked in developing and nurturing their relationships with the target communities,
- The beneficiaries were represented in the implementation team,
- The implementation team discussed with, listened to, understood and addressed the comments and issues raised by the larger community through consultations, and
- The funding agency was flexible enough to allow adaptation or adjustments to unforeseen circumstances.

The lesson learned in this instance is that a formal mechanism for monitoring and re-evaluating priority activities needs to be built-in to the Project design. A formal mechanism to achieve this was lacking in the original ENCORE Project design. It was only through the dedication and hands-on management style of the implementation teams that community priorities were identified and subsequent efforts made to align Project activities with the priorities identified by the target communities.

THEME 2

STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP

A recent global review of integrated conservation and development projects concluded that conservation organizations need to place greater emphasis on establishing conservation agendas that balance the diverse and often conflicting interests of stakeholders, and that they should always work in strategic partnerships. The ENCORE project has learned valuable lessons and/or reinforced useful principles regarding stakeholder collaboration and partnerships that are of value to the conservation and development communities in the Eastern Caribbean and globally.

Like other conservation and development projects designed during this period, ENCORE is an example of a collaborative approach to natural resources management. Its goal is to be reached through a partnership of regional and national agencies, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations and the private sector. The ENCORE project supports the establishment or strengthening of numerous partnerships, through regional boards, focal units, national and local coordinating committees, and project technical committees. It gives high priority to local community participation in the partnership.

LESSONS LEARNED AND/OR PRINCIPLES REINFORCED

1 *There is No Prescription for Partnerships* Dedication and flexibility are the keys to effective collaboration and partnership building

ENCORE provides a mechanism for stakeholder collaboration and partnership in the planning and implementing of integrated resource management activities that did not exist before in the region. At the regional level, it has facilitated successful government collaboration on the development of legislation, policies, regulations and/or guidelines on pesticide use and handling, water quality monitoring, sanitary survey and environmental assessment. At the national level, it contributed to central and local government agencies, private sectors and NGOs working together, more than ever before, to plan and implement environmental management activities through National Coordinating Committees, and other informal coordination facilitated by the National Coordinators. At the local level, it promoted Local Site Management Teams (LSMT), made up of government representatives and community-based organizations, to work in raising public awareness and to promote community participation in environmental management.

The ENCORE experience showed that oftentimes, *ad hoc* committees or boards have a better chance of success than the constituted ones that meet as often as quarterly. In small countries with small professional pools, very often the same group of people serve on several committees concurrently. Unless they are very dedicated, it is difficult for these people to respond to the needs of all these committees and at the same time fulfill their regular duties and responsibilities. For example, the functioning of the National Coordinating Committee (NCC), the advisory body established to assist the National Coordinator, was problematic in Dominica. Very often, it was very difficult or even

impossible for the NCC to hold its meeting because of schedule conflicts. Eventually, it was disbanded. When necessary, the National Coordinator had to contact the members of the defunct-NCC on a one on one basis. ENCORE was not able to tackle this problem successfully. In St. Lucia, however, the NCC continues to function without problems, mostly because of a larger pool of people to rely on. The contrast highlights the point that cases will differ under different circumstances and in different settings.

2 *Partnerships Take Time* Multiple stakeholder partnerships take time to develop and are most effective when built upon a common agenda, good communication and mutual trust

ENCORE activities have been effective when the partners have a common agenda, such as promotion of nature tourism or improvement of sanitation. Partnerships proved challenging when partners had different priorities. Partnerships have also been less effective when there is inadequate capacity among partners to carry out their respective responsibilities and tasks. Many of the community-based organizations the project proposed to work with fall in that category.

Building a partnership between government and NGOs was particularly challenging and has not always worked. Although the NGO sector has important experience and skills to contribute to community-based resource management, especially in the areas of community development and empowerment, ENCORE only partly succeeded (on a case by case basis) in integrating this vibrant sector into Project activities. The sentiment most often expressed was that with Governments being the lead project implementors, NGOs were less willing to participate given their sometimes adverse relations with Governments.

On the community level however, a large number of Project activities were able to foster the participation of community-based organizations (CBOs) by working with them in developing and maintaining a common agenda, good communication, mutual trust and a commitment to work together. Equitable decision-making processes cemented the partnership. This ENCORE approach is illustrated in Case Study No. 2. Projects with objectives similar to those of ENCORE need to plan to address the issue of stakeholder roles and mechanisms for collaboration as early as possible.

CASE STUDY No. 2

COMMON AGENDA AND CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT

The Lagoon community in Portsmouth, Dominica is a good example of how citizens from a local community can work in partnership with public sector agencies to design and implement a solution to what both sides agreed to be a priority problem. Various consultations held in Portsmouth identified poor public sanitation as a major community level environmental issue. Garbage littered the community. The area was unsightly and its close proximity to the tourist destinations of Cabrits National Park and Indian River made the issue more compelling. Worse, more than forty families living close to the Purple Turtle beach, one of the most popular beaches on the island, had no access to functioning toilet facilities. They had no alternative but to dispose of their household sewage in the adjacent wetland or on the less used sections of the beach. Water quality monitoring activities undertaken by CEHI revealed higher than acceptable levels of fecal coliform, total coliform, and other bacteria in the adjacent waterbodies. These conditions posed threats to human health, the quality of water in the Bay and the health of marine ecosystems.

The ENCORE-sponsored Local Site Management Team (LSMT) for Portsmouth decided to address the issues. (Membership to the LSMT included ENCORE, the Water Authority, the Divisions of Environmental Health, Forestry and Tourism, the Town Council, local businesses, hotel operators, community representatives and others.) The physical environment of Portsmouth presented limitations to easy solutions. The area contains rivers, estuaries, ravines and wetlands, and has a high water table that creates difficulties to manage household wastes. There is no municipal sewerage system and the individual treatment systems are inadequate for these poorly drained soils. Over 50% of the population depended on a combination of communal pit latrines, bucket latrines, and other forms of non-formal waste removal.

The LSMT sought to identify the critical actions necessary to overcome the problem. Through consultations and the assistance of the Environmental Health Unit, the group decided on the first target community, and assessed the technologies that would work in the water logged soils. It identified the WHO-promoted double vault, ventilated improved pit latrines DVIP as the most appropriate technology. It developed a proposal to construct a first set of DVIPs with ENCORE funding the non-locally available construction materials, Environmental Health Division providing the technical expertise and the beneficiaries furnishing the labor and all locally available materials. **Based on its capacity, each partner took the lead in the different implementation phases of this common project activity** under the coordination of the ENCORE Local Site Manager. The LSMT of Soufriere in Dominica and those of St. Lucia used a similar approach to address the issues of waste management in their respective communities.

This case study illustrates how partners with different backgrounds, capacities and skills can rally behind a common agenda, devise and implement appropriate solutions, and equitably share their responsibilities through trust, good communication and a commitment to work together.

3 *Inter-Agency Collaboration* Promoting inter-agency collaboration is challenging, but essential to sound environmental management

The project played a catalytic role in promoting intersectorial collaboration. It fostered partnership between the Departments of Forestry and Fisheries in the management of fragile or bio-diverse sensitive sites. Successful elements of this type of partnership included a focus on the priority agendas and complementary skills of the two agencies, along with the provision of financial and material resources by the Project. Despite their best efforts, often the problem of turf protection surfaced. Sometimes, the intervention of higher level Government Officials, such as a Minister or Permanent Secretary, became necessary to bring the two sectors back to the table.

High-level commitment as well as appropriate human and financial resources are needed for collaboration and/or coordination to last. More time is also needed to work through jurisdictional and implementation issues, and to build trust among the different government agencies responsible for environmental and resource management. It is uncertain if collaboration among these agencies will be sustained once the catalytic element (in this case ENCORE) is removed because inter-sectorial coordination is difficult to maintain and is naturally a low priority in these agencies' primary agenda.

THEME 3: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

A central element of the ENCORE Project is to demonstrate that community participation in natural resource management can work in the Eastern Caribbean. The project design called for government agencies to coordinate community involvement and to facilitate the involvement of the Local Site residents in project planning, implementation and monitoring. The results would be the building and/or increase of community confidence, self-reliance and decision-making skills as well as the improvement of government agencies understanding of the desires and capabilities of local communities. ENCORE promotes community participation through environmental awareness and education workshops, project planning meetings, consultations and skill building workshops, proposal writing, etc. ENCORE seeks to ensure that the participation is “real” not “token”, “active” not “passive”. The LSMTs serve as the Projects’ primary mechanism for working with the target communities. They identify and plan community project activities for submission to ENCORE for support and assistance.

To date, several lessons were learned from ENCORE’s effort to promote and subsequently ensure 1) the establishment of mechanisms for community participation that have been discussed and agreed to by the target community, 2) the representation of all community interest groups in the particular activity, 3) the existence of effective communication channels between the community and external partners, and between community representatives and the community-at-large, 4) the involvement of the community in all phases of the activity--planning, implementation, and evaluation--, and 5) the strengthening of community skills to carry on the activity.

LESSONS LEARNED AND/OR PRINCIPLES REINFORCED

- 1 *“Real” Community Participation* Promoting “real” community participation in environmental management is time-consuming and requires commitment, patience and skill**

The Project has been successful in raising community awareness about environmental issues and in generating interest in participating in improved environmental management. In the absence of formally organized community groups, project staff spent a large part of the first two years working directly with numerous individuals and groups in the target communities to facilitate their understanding of the issues at stake, and to identify, plan and implement community project activities. It used the bottom-up “process” of awareness raising, dialogue and capacity building for sustainable environmental activities. Despite the pressure from all angles for immediate physical results, the Project Implementors concentrated their efforts in the lengthy process of building community and institutional capacity. This was essential in order to promote effective community participation and reconcile, as one observer put it, “what the community wanted” which was basic infrastructure projects, and “what the project had to offer” which was less tangible sustainable resource management activities.

Another lesson linked to this one has to do with staffing. Additional project staff with community and institutional development skills, during the first three years, could have worked directly on the capacity building aspect, giving the other staff members the opportunity to concentrate their efforts on direct natural resources management issues.

2 *Moving From Dependency to Self-Help* Significant effort is needed to assist local communities to move from a “dependency mentality” to a self-help orientation

Throughout ENCORE’s life, the effective promotion of community-based natural resource management has been hampered by what is sometimes called “a dependency mentality” in the local communities. For historical reasons, including hurricane relief programs and the relatively easy income earned from tourism, some communities tend to be more interested in handouts and projects initiated in a top-down manner than in less tangible, self-initiated activities. The ENCORE experience shows that when local residents are given the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process about **what** initiatives will be undertaken, and **how** they will be implemented, they must also be allowed (with the relevant technical assistance) to **identify** the environmental issues facing their community and to **articulate the priority activities** required to overcome them.

The Project found that activities that directly address community needs capture the attention and interest of the residents. Through the process of identifying and designing a solution to their common problems, the community members gain confidence and develop enthusiasm for the solutions. They are much more interested and committed to the implementation and monitoring of project activities. Through this approach, some community groups (like the community of Fond Gens Libres, Case Study No. 3) were seen to take the lead in implementing their project activities.

CASE STUDY No. 3 COMMUNITY ACTION IN FOND GENS LIBRES

The community of Fond Gens Libres is located at the base of Gros Piton, in the immediate watershed of the Soufriere Marine Management Area (SMMA). The Pitons area is known throughout the world for its outstanding beauty. The twin volcanic plugs that form the Pitons contain unique biological resources, and are the home to important historical and cultural assets. The area has been proposed as a World Heritage Site to UNESCO. Despite the large numbers of tourists that flock to the region, the area has been poorly managed as a tourist destination. Many stakeholder groups including tour operators, the St. Lucia Tourist Board, Forestry Department, the Soufriere Development Foundation, the St. Lucia National Trust, tour guides and local residents have expressed an interest in developing the tourism potential of the site. The initial focus was the improvement of the Gros Piton trail system.

CASE STUDY No. 3 (continue)
COMMUNITY ACTION IN FOND GENS LIBRES

ENCORE initiated a process of community consultations with participation of the above stakeholders. These led to the creation of a Project Implementation Committee under the leadership of the Forestry Department. ENCORE commissioned an inventory of the Flora and Fauna of the Gros Piton area, the preparation of a Management Strategy and Plan of Action for the Gros Piton Nature Site, and the development of a System to Monitor Visitor's Impact on the Site. The plan of activities to develop the site included the upgrading of the trail system, construction of an Interpretation Center, installation of basic sanitation facilities, implementation of an environmental awareness program, development of a tour guide association and training in monitoring of visitor impacts.

The community residents contributed to the development of these plans. However, they insisted that their first priorities were not the studies, the trails nor the interpretation center. They pointed out that the community had no meeting place and that water supply and disposal facilities for solid and human wastes were their major problems. Therefore, the attendance to these basic needs should be first in the implementation schedule. ENCORE decided to change the implementation schedule to address promptly the basic sanitation aspect. With the assistance of the Environmental Health Division and the Community Development Department, it funded the construction of 30 Double Vault Ventilated Pit Latrines (DVIP). As the Project resources would not allow for the construction of the community center nor the provision of potable water, the ENCORE staff successfully facilitated negotiations between the community and the management of the St. Lucia Basic Trust Fund to support these activities. The ENCORE funded activities in the community would serve as counterpart contributions.

A core group of community residents was formed to focus on these initiatives. With the technical assistance of the Environmental Health Officer, the residents virtually took the lead on the construction of the double vault latrines. More than fifteen of them were constructed during a Christmas Holiday season. ENCORE funded the non-locally available materials while the residents were responsible for the labor and all locally available materials such as sand, rocks, etc. Based on that experience, the residents decided to address the litter situation in their community through a clean-up campaign. They continued with the planting of ornamentals in prominent locations to beautify their community. With guidance from the Forestry Officer, they contributed in identifying the location for the interpretation center. At times, they served as pressure group to push the representatives of Government Departments and the Project Implementation Committee to act expeditiously.

3 *The Legal Framework* The success of community participation in natural resource management depends significantly on the existence of the appropriate legal framework

ENCORE experience confirmed another lesson learned in other places where community participation has been tried, namely, that a supportive legal framework significantly increases the ability of the beneficiaries to participate in a meaningful manner. This is especially true for situations like ENCORE where "co-management" is being advocated.

Co-management requires a formal sharing of authority between the state and community institutions involved in the management of natural resources. In the ENCORE project, a number of co-management agreements were to be established between government departments, the private sector and community institutions. However, without the proper legal instrument, there is no formal basis for confirming the roles and responsibilities of the different sectors. In St. Lucia, the Soufriere Marine Management Authority (SMMA) has been established and is managed by a committee comprising representatives from the Department of Fisheries, fisherfolk, divers, hoteliers, the community and the private sector (see Case Study No. 7). However, there is no legal instrument sanctioning the Committee other than the Fisheries Act, which effectively gives full authority to the Department of Fisheries. Therefore, the final authority for the management of the marine area remains with the government. Quite understandably, the Department of Fisheries is reluctant to hand over full responsibility to the Committee, since it will have to be ultimately accountable for the management results. In effect, this is not a true sharing of responsibility since the State is required to give clearance for fundamental planning and management decisions such as budgets and work plans. In short, the State retains the final say.

Generally, in the Caribbean, legislation does not provide for community participation. Projects like ENCORE have shown that if the region is serious about participation, then legal instruments will have to be introduced to support it. This will facilitate capacity building for community institutions, provide genuine mechanisms for participation, and would finally lead to the devolution of authority to community institutions.

THEME 4: CAPACITY BUILDING

Capacity building is usually one of the desired outcomes of development projects. It is about increasing the ability of institutions and individuals to carry out a task and achieve an outcome. While it is a by-product of many project activities, some projects will make the deliberate effort to include it as a separate component. It is a means of promoting sustainability and is rooted in a social development or empowerment philosophy. Projects that propose to build capacity do not provide aid in the form of direct contributions in cash or kind to recipients, instead they provide funds and technical support to enable community members and organizations to develop the skills and abilities to provide for themselves.

ENCORE was designed to build capacity at the regional, national and local level. Like many other Projects with similar objectives, ENCORE's capacity building program focused on the strengthening of institutions -- governmental, non-governmental and community-based organizations. This program had a multifaceted aspect: education and training to develop human resources (study grant programs, training workshops and seminars), networking to share information and experience (ecotourism tour in Belize, technical exchange to develop the Belvidere Estate program in Grenada), development of guidelines and standards (EIA guidelines, Rapid Appraisal guidelines), and physical improvements to reinforce the infrastructures (equipment of water quality monitoring laboratories). The project experience showed that a well coordinated multi-faceted capacity building program (Case Study No 4) has a better chance of success than one that covers only one aspect.

LESSONS LEARNED AND/OR PRINCIPLES REINFORCED

- 1 ***Needs Assessment*** A needs assessment at the initial stage ensures that the program responds to the specific needs of the beneficiaries. —

Whenever needs assessment was not part of the planning and design stage, it has to be conducted early in the implementation phase. Conducting a needs assessment allows project personnel to ascertain the capacity level of the collaborating institutions in order to allocate the resources (time, finances, personnel, infrastructure) necessary to support the project activities and to implement the appropriate capacity building activities where needed. In Case Study No 5, the needs assessment conducted for the Indian River tour guides in Dominica and the Soufriere water taxi guides in St. Lucia was key to the success of these capacity building programs.

CASE STUDY No. 4

IMPROVEMENT OF WATER QUALITY MONITORING CAPABILITIES

A major focus of the Water Quality Monitoring Program implemented by CEHI is the building of capacity of all of the OECS Member States for water sample collection, treatment and analysis, the development of water quality databanks and the production and use of good and practical water quality data and reports. This program covers three major areas: the physical improvement of the water monitoring laboratories, the development of water quality guidelines and standards, and the training of the relevant personnel.

- *Physical improvement of water monitoring facilities:* The CEHI led assessment described in Case Study No. 1, identified one or two lead agencies in each country for water quality monitoring. In most cases, they were the Water Authority and the Environmental Health Inspection Unit. The assessment also identified each institution's equipment needs for the monitoring of drinking, coastal and surface waters. Under the ENCORE Project, CEHI procured for and commissioned to each institution or agency materials and equipment such as a computer, printer, electronic balance, portable pH meters, incubators, drying ovens, turbidimeters, conductivity meters, thermometers, reagents, filters, etc. The receiving agency committed itself to the operation, maintenance and replacement of the materials.
- *Development of Water Quality Guidelines and Standards:* With the active collaboration of its water quality monitoring partners, CEHI produced a comprehensive two-volume series to document procedures and standards for the analysis of drinking water, and is currently developing guidelines for sanitary surveys. The former, adapted from the World Health Organization (WHO), were endorsed by the CARICOM Council of Ministers of Health and are currently in use in all the OECS Member States.
- *Training of Personnel in Monitoring Laboratories:* Training is a corollary of infrastructure improvement and the promotion of new guidelines and standards. CEHI provided the necessary training to the relevant staff of the target agencies on the various aspects of water quality monitoring, the use of the equipment, materials, guidelines and standards. As necessary, these agencies continue to receive technical assistance from CEHI.

By covering these different and complementary aspects of the capacity building program, the chances of success increased. Up to now, this program seems to work, mainly because it responded to expressed needs of the beneficiaries.

2 *Measuring Impacts* Mechanisms for measuring impact is an essential component of capacity building

There are many factors external to the individual and the institution that can affect success or failure of a Capacity Building Program. Therefore, mechanisms need to be put in place so that its impacts can be measured and assessed. The information from these impact assessments would help to highlight the inhibiting or facilitating factors in the work environment which need to be mitigated or enhanced.

Numerous training activities (workshops, seminars, etc.) were conducted under the ENCORE Project. They targeted Project staff, public servants and personnel of collaborating institutions, such as laboratory technicians, teachers, as well as representatives of community-based organizations. Among other aspects, they covered proposal writing, waste disposal, soil conservation, tour guiding, project management, environmental impact assessment, water quality monitoring, etc. It is widely accepted throughout the region that the series of training programs organized, supported, sponsored or coordinated under the ENCORE Project has significantly contributed in the development of human resources in the sub-region in the area of conservation and coastal zone management. However, no mechanisms have been established to formally measure its impacts. The ENCORE staff agrees that this information would have been beneficial in measuring the success of the Project as a whole and in developing activities to fill the gaps. Learning from this experience, the NRMU has since been taking a results oriented approach to programming in an attempt to have quantifiable measures of the outputs of its activities.

3 *Experiential Learning* Learning from peer's experiences is among the most effective tools for capacity building

During the ENCORE Project a number of exchanges were organized for the Project staff and collaborating organizations to visit similar projects. One of the more successful ones was the visit of the Project staff and representatives from national and local NGOs to Belize to learn from the Belizean tourism experiences. This activity offered the participants new ideas and helped them in the development of their own ecotourism program. As a follow-up to the trip, the St. Lucia Tourism Board (with ENCORE co-funding) organized a three-day national workshop to share the experience and launch the development of a tourism strategy for St. Lucia. Principles of that strategy formed the basis of a three year Nature/Heritage Tourism Development Project financed with STABEX funding. People who participated in the Belizean trip were hired as consultants to assist the NRMU in developing an OECS tourism strategy and in facilitating the workshop to discuss that strategy. The St. Lucia National Trust is currently implementing a camping ground facility at Anse la Liberte with some ideas borrowed from the Belizean experience. One of the participants on the trip is currently the acting Permanent Secretary for Tourism in Dominica. This illustrates the importance of the proper selection of the participants. The impacts of an exchange or a training program would be longer lasting when the participants can promote changes in their respective institutions.

CASE STUDY No. 5

CREATION OF TOUR GUIDE ASSOCIATIONS

Among the community-based organizations strengthened through ENCORE, the Portsmouth Indian River Tour Guide Association (PIRTGA) in Dominica, and the Soufriere Water Taxi Association (SWTA) in St. Lucia stand as two success stories. Although located in two different islands, their stories of growth through the Project share many similarities.

Originally known as the "jetty boys," the PIRTGA members make a living by taking tourists on row boat rides on the Indian River. The Indian River has been attracting tourist interest for years because of the richness of its flora and fauna and its accessibility. The jetty boys would approach the tourists as they come to Portsmouth and negotiate to take them up the river for a fee. Unfortunately, because of the number of tour guides -- new ones would come to the river all the time -- there would be an intensive "hustle" as each one tried to undercut the other to get the fare. Oftentimes, police had to intervene to re-establish order. Many of the new guides would use motor boats on the river. The waves created by these boats would accelerate riverbank erosion, weakening tree roots and making them prone to be blown over during a hurricane. The fumes would also tend to linger and spoil the natural atmosphere of the river.

Similarly, the members of what is now called the Soufriere Water Taxi Association were once known as the "boat boys." The group is made up of water taxi-operators and yacht guides. The former provided a range of services for tourists, including sightseeing tours, snorkeling trips, and transportation for shoppers between the towns and villages of the West-Coast. The yacht guides used to secure the stern lines for yachts, sell souvenirs and provide security services for yacht owners. Like in the case of the "jetty boys," rising unemployment caused an in-flux of persons into the trade, causing some aggressive behavior as each person tried to secure a customer. Tourists and yachters began to complain about harassment.

In the case of the Indian River, the ENCORE Local Site Management Team (LSMT) recognized the important role that the tour guides could play in the conservation of the river ecosystem while sustaining their livelihood. After a series of consultations to assess the needs of the group, the LSMT assisted them in organizing themselves into an association, the Portsmouth Indian River Tour Guide Association (PIRTGA). Various workshops were held to facilitate the formulation of the association's goals and objectives, prepare the by-laws and identify activities which would promote the conservation of the Indian River and the development of the tour guiding business. A training program was developed to enhance their skills. This program is still going on, more than three years after its initiation. It includes workshops on First Aid, flora and fauna of the Indian River system, business management, tour guiding, history of the island, etc.

CASE STUDY No. 5 (continue)
CREATION OF TOUR GUIDE ASSOCIATIONS

The Association allowed the tour guides to begin addressing some of the issues that affect both the health of their business and that of the river ecosystem. The members have drawn up a constitution that outlines the codes of conduct and the guidelines for the Indian River tour business. This has led to better physical appearance and behavior of the guides as a whole. PIRTGA is now a very important business partner of the tour operators with whom it has yearly tour guiding contracts. During the first two years, ENCORE facilitated and assisted with the contract negotiations, but now the association is handling them directly.

The turning point for the Soufriere Water Taxi Association came with the creation of the Soufriere Marine Management Area. During the consultations, the "boat boys" were given the opportunity to share their concerns about their business. One of their main issues was the competition that they had from the hotels, some of which were running their own water taxi services. The hoteliers and other stakeholders expressed their concerns regarding the "boat boys," they were not organized or licensed, most of them had no insurance and they took people on tours without life jackets. ENCORE assisted with the grouping of the boat boys into a formal association, the Soufriere Water Taxi Association, with by-laws and executive members who are elected annually. All the members are licensed with identification cards, have insurance and carry safety equipment. The work of ENCORE facilitated their access to other donors such as the French Mission which assisted them with uniforms.

The capacity building program for these two organizations was developed with the active participation of the beneficiaries and other relevant institutions (Tourism Division in Dominica, the St. Lucia tourism Board in St. Lucia, the Fisheries Department, the Forestry Department, and the Soufriere Development Foundation). Based on the needs assessment, the program responded to the expressed and identified needs of the beneficiaries, addressed their weaknesses and built on their strengths. It resulted in PIRTGA's and SWTA's developing working partnerships with sectors like the tour operators and Hotel Association, which originally despised their members. These organizations have become vibrant economic forces in their respective community. There are still problems to be resolved. For example, some of the PIRTGA members are still reluctant to adhere to the rules of their Constitution, and resent sanctions from the Executive Committee. The land surrounding the river is privately owned and still does not have any protected status.

ENCORE was designed so that the regional and local site activities would be mutually supportive. One of the mechanisms which facilitated this sharing and contributed to the capacity building of the Project staff was the quarterly meeting at which all the Project staff met to discuss the various aspects of their work plans. This offered them an opportunity to share and learn from each other's experiences. Furthermore, staff members of the LSM, using their experience, assisted in the process leading to the development of the management plan for the Belvidere Estate in Grenada. They also contributed their know-how to other non-ENCORE funded activities undertaken by the OECS-NRMU.

THEME 5:

POLICY FRAMEWORKS AND GUIDELINES

The ENCORE Project set out to accomplish an ambitious policy framework centered on improving environmental management in the OECS Member States of the Eastern Caribbean. This framework included the establishment of a) a regional consensus on the basic harmonized legislative framework which should be put in place in each country to encourage sustainable natural resource management, b) a focal point in each country for coordinating matters affecting the environment, and c) a basic environmental management plan in each country. The OECS-NRMU was to become fully functional in coordinating and guiding these policy discussions. It would act as the regional center for policy development on environmental concerns. The NRMU as the technical arm of the OECS, overseen by a Board consisting of the Ministers responsible for the Environment, was perfectly positioned to play this role. Similarly, CEHI, with its Board consisting of Ministers responsible for Health in the CARICOM Member States was able to be a catalyst in upgrading environmental health standards.

In general, ENCORE's support to the development of policy frameworks, regulations and guidelines at the regional level was strengthened through the training of technical persons from the region in the specific areas pertaining to these policies, regulations and guidelines as well as in Environmental Impact Assessment. This work was further enhanced through the raising of citizens' awareness of environmental issues such as pesticide use and handling, waste management and disposal, etc.

LESSONS LEARNED AND/OR PRINCIPLES REINFORCED

1 *Policy Formulation* Consultations among policy makers, technocrats and other stakeholder groups are the best foundation for the formulation of sound policy, guidelines and regulations

Policy regulations and guidelines formulation, both at the national and the regional levels, does not and cannot take place in a vacuum, nor can it simply be imposed from the outside by organizations wishing to effect or promote changes. The process of policy reform (formulation, endorsement and enactment) has many facets including direct involvement of political leaders, advice, guidance and inputs from technical staff, as well as pressure from the civilian society, i.e. formal organizations and general public. In order for technical staff to be able to provide sound technical advice to policy makers at the national level, they must be aware of the rationale, importance, methodologies, techniques and likely outcomes of proposed policy shifts. Successful formulation and endorsement of policy framework, guidelines and regulations depend highly on the support of an appropriate cadre of professionals.

Regional organizations like the OECS-NRMU and CEHI receive their mandate from their governing bodies to undertake specific sets of activities. For example, the NRMU has the mandatory responsibility for assisting the OECS Member States in all matters pertaining to the sustainable use of natural resources, and to secure the funding necessary to attain that goal. While the NRMU can

provide leadership in areas such as harmonization of environmental legislation and training of technical persons in environmental disciplines, it is not a policy making body. Rather, it provides the forum for the policy makers, the technocrats and the other stakeholder groups to work together, at the national level and in regional meetings, in establishing the agenda for policy formulation. Through the ENCORE Project, the NRMU compiles, analyzes and distributes the relevant data and information to guide the discussions and the development of the frameworks. The review of the proposed frameworks continues at the national level through the national focal units until endorsed by the appropriate body (ies). (Case Study No 6 illustrates the process.) Only then the policy frameworks as revised are endorsed by the regional body, usually the Minister responsible for environment and/or natural resources management of each Member State.

2 *Public Awareness Campaigns* Well-targeted Public Awareness Campaigns are an important element in the formulation and endorsement of policy framework, guidelines and regulations

Public awareness campaigns to increase the knowledge of the general public, or specific sub-groups thereof, on a particular environmental issue are based upon the premise that in order for people to take actions, they must be aware that a problem exists in the first place. Awareness leads to knowledge and understanding that in turn leads to corrective actions or mitigation. The design and successful implementation of a public awareness program centered on a particular environmental issue does not necessarily mean that the issue would be satisfactorily addressed. Hence, focusing mostly on the means of delivery of a particular public awareness message does not guarantee that the desired actions will follow. Indeed, issues such as economic status of target groups, practical alternatives available to the present course of action and opportunities to switch to more environmentally friendly activities affect the decision to correct or mitigate. The success of any policy, regulations or guidelines depends significantly on the support of the target group(s). In turn, the support rests highly on good knowledge and understanding of the problems and issues. At the same time, in order for an environmental awareness program to effect behavioral changes, it must be accompanied with needs assessment, training and capacity building, it must also be placed within the appropriate framework, including policy and context.

The OECS-NRMU's efforts at addressing the pesticide use and handling issues under the ENCORE Project (Case Study No 7) provide a very good example of the linkages among guidelines formulation, public awareness and institutional strengthening. These efforts evolved around, among others: a) the identification of the parties involved in each Member State and the assessment of their institutional capabilities, b) the strengthening of national-level Pesticide Control Boards and their creation where none existed, c) the development and conduct of a public awareness campaign on pesticide issues, the development and conduct of training in environmental and health risks of pesticide in the Eastern Caribbean, and d) the development of policy briefs on pesticide management.

CASE STUDY No. 6
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS (EIAs)

Prior to the ENCORE project, Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) were seldom conducted or used in the OECS Member States, although they were mandated under their respective Physical Planning Ordinances. Based on a training needs assessment, the OECS-NRMU developed an EIA training program targeting technical staff from relevant government departments and NGOs. During the past four years, the OECS-NRMU has been sponsoring the training courses on an on-going basis. This has contributed to a significant increase in the number of EIAs conducted and used in the OECS Member States. Given the level that most trainees were starting from, the courses initially aimed at promoting a basic understanding of EIA's by focusing on their importance and role in sustainable development, contents of an EIA, and case studies of how EIAs are useful.

ENCORE has linked up with other donor supported programs within the NRMU portfolio to expand and sustain the training program. For example, with GTZ funding, the NRMU developed frame harmonized EIA legislation. Originally, this legislation, while being applauded by the technicians, was not supported by the political directorate. To promote its acceptance, it was revised and incorporated into a harmonized frame legislation for Physical Planning which was subsequently endorsed by all Member States. Standing alone, the EIA Legislation was considered as being anti-development by the political directorate. However, the same sector endorsed and supported it as part of a larger legislative framework for improving physical planning activities.

As part of the necessary support structure for the institutionalization of new practices such as EIA, the NRMU provided assistance to three Member States in developing specific action plans for implementing EIAs. In addition to the human resource development aspect, these action plans included equipment upgrading and database development. The EIA training program initiated under ENCORE has significantly evolved. It is currently supported by the appropriate legislation base. The NRMU is also in a better position to continue to assist the Member States. Indeed, last year the OECS Ministers of Environment Policy Committee expanded the role of the NRMU with its designation as an EIA review agency. Currently, the NRMU has the mandate to assist the Member States in (a) the preparation of the Terms of Reference and the conduct of the relevant scoping exercises, and (b) the review of EIAs submitted by developers.

CASE STUDY No. 7
PUBLIC AWARENESS ON PESTICIDE ISSUES

In the early stages, the attempt to raise the attitudes of the public towards pesticide safety issues was largely based on a region-wide media campaign focused on radio programs and articles in the print media. An early assessment of this program and other public awareness programs in the region, revealed that a simple media campaign would not be sufficient to change peoples attitudes towards the use and handling of agricultural pesticides. Other shortcomings identified in the ENCORE supported pesticide awareness program were that there was inadequate interactions with the targeted communities during the implementation phase, and that given its regional nature, the program paid insufficient attention to enhancing national capabilities. Thus, the conclusion that the effort should include the institutional aspect, policy issues, as well as the training of nationals in order to build in-country capacity to continue and expand on the program.

A series of consultations was held on each island. These consultations brought together the various groups involved with pesticides or related issues. The groups included farmers, medical personnel, pesticide salespeople, agricultural extension personnel, Pesticide Control Board members and natural resources management specialists. The national consultations on pesticides and related issues led to a regional one where it became apparent that there was a definite need to build-up the capacity of National Pesticide Control Boards to better assess chemical pesticide impacts and devise safeguards. From this, an action plan evolved that gradually shifted the burden for program implementation from regional to national level.

The NRMU-implemented pesticide awareness program that encompassed the development and coordination of media jingles and articles in the media, as well as the organization of a pesticide week, shifted into national programs. With funding from the NRMU, under the ENCORE Project, a strategy was articulated in each country identifying the roles and responsibilities of the collaborating agencies. This led to local adaptations of the previously developed "Regional Pesticide Awareness Program". The following year, it became the responsibility of the national Pesticide Control Boards to design and implement its programs with the technical and funding assistance from the regional program, where it could not be obtained locally. This year, all responsibility for the program has been assumed by national entities, and the role of the regional program has been limited to assisting national programs in identifying funding sources.

THEME 6

ADOPTION OF IMPROVED NRM PRACTICES

ENCORE has been and is still involved in promoting different improved environmental practices, policies, guidelines and management plans. Among others, these include

- new standards for drinking water quality,
- guidelines for water quality monitoring,
- guidelines and policy briefs for pesticide use and handling,
- guidelines for environmental impact assessment,
- guidelines for watershed appraisal,
- improved sanitation practices,
- improved solid waste collection,
- the Coastal Resources Management Initiative,
- enhanced coastal zone management through the efforts of the Soufriere Marine Management Area (SMMA), Canaries-Anse La Raye Marine Management Area (CAMMA) and the Cabrits National Park,
- efforts at sound management of fragile or protected areas such as the Belvidere Estate, Gros Piton Nature Site and Anse la Liberte Nature Site, the proposed Sulfur Springs National Park, and
- efforts to enhance income generating activities in local communities through conservation and nature based tourism

In the long run, the success of the initiatives started under the ENCORE Project will be assessed on the degree of utilization and adoption of these practices, policies, guidelines, concepts and management plans by the target beneficiaries. The degree of their adoption directly affects the impact of the project on the target population. Similarly, the extent to which people internalize and utilize them is a precursor of how these practices, policies, guidelines and management plans will be sustained over the long run. In order for people to adopt new practices, certain requirements must be satisfied. First, they must understand what is being advocated, and be willing to experiment with and adopt the new practices. Second, they must have the economic incentive to work towards a new practice or technique because it is directly in their own financial interest or because the consequences of not adopting would be too high. Case Study No. 8 describes the process of formulating improved NRM guidelines in an environmentally and economically sensitive region of St. Lucia.

LESSONS LEARNED AND/OR PRINCIPLES REINFORCED

- 1 ***Participation of Target Groups*** Participation of the target groups in the development of guidelines, management plans, etc. is essential to their adoption

Target user groups must be given the opportunity to have a say in the drafting of the rules and regulations that will affect them. Traditional user groups such as fishermen have a wealth of local knowledge about the status of the natural resources, recreational features of interest to visitors, and

potential hazards and areas requiring special attention. They are also concerned about sustaining the welfare of their family to the continuing use of the resources.

During the consultation process for the SMMA, local residents and other user groups participated in meetings and contributed to the designation of the management zones. This was facilitated through field trips to the site on sea and on land where they were given the opportunity to view natural features and comment on the location of the different management zones.

In addition, the Technical Advisory Committee was selected to incorporate representatives of the user groups, interest groups, government departments and others. This 22-member committee met on a monthly basis to discuss issues concerning management of the area and to advise staff on how best to proceed. However, this Technical Advisory Committee has proven too large to reach consensus and decisions needed to guide management. An internal management review by CANARI in 1998 has led to the restructuring of this Committee to allow for a streamlined Executive Committee and an Advisory Committee.

2 *Empowerment of Target Groups* Effective adoption of guidelines, management plans, etc lies extensively on the empowerment of the target groups

In order for new practices to be adopted and sustained, target user groups must not only understand the technology being promoted, but they must also take an active part in the management of the resources. This can be a wide gap to bridge in the case of residents that are used to government handouts, and who are now expected to participate in the management of programs in their communities. Community residents may not have exactly the same goals as those from the outside who advocate programs to work towards sustainable development of that area. Community residents may not possess the organizational and management skills to take complicated decisions and provide direction to staff. They may not possess sufficient conflict resolution skills to rise above local resource disputes or local political or religious differences. Yet, they value the resources, and in many occasions, they are more concerned about their proper management, and are more aware of the available options than the outsiders. Sometimes, they only require a forum to express themselves freely.

Environmentalists, technocrats and decision-makers must be prepared to accept and support the empowerment of community members to participate in the management of the resources. Empowerment means that there must be a willingness to divest some or all management control from a centralized authority, and a sense of trust that the programs will be implemented in accordance with shared goals. This is true whether full management authority is to be delegated to a community group or an NGO as for the Purple Turtle Beach Facilities in Dominica or the Belvidere Estate in Grenada, or a co-management scheme is developed as for the Gros Piton Site or the SMMA in St. Lucia.

CASE STUDY No. 8
SOUFRIERE MARINE MANAGEMENT AREA (SMMA)

The Soufriere Marine Management Area was established on an 11 km stretch of the west central coast of St. Lucia from Anse Jambon in the north to Anse L'Ivrogne in the south. The area encompasses the world famous Pitons which rise steeply out of the sea. In recent years, the marine and coastal areas in this region have been under increasing pressure from human activities, and there has been conflict between competing uses for the same resources. The SMMA was created to resolve these conflicts, and to ensure that all economic activities can prosper without harming the environment.

The process leading to the establishment of the SMMA began in 1994 with a series of ENCORE-funded and facilitated community level consultations. These consultations brought together representatives of the fishermen, dive operators, hoteliers, yacht operators, water taxi operators, Fisheries Department, Soufriere Town Council, Soufriere Development Foundation, etc. Special efforts were taken to ensure that the views of each group were heard, reconciled whenever possible and incorporated into the management scheme developed. The SMMA was zoned into marine reserve areas, fishing priority areas, recreational areas, multiple use areas and yacht mooring areas. The vision of the SMMA is as a place where people and nature can live in harmony, and where natural resources can provide the basis of economic development now and in the future. The subsequent Government approval of the Management Plan led to the establishment of the management structure. This also opened the way for the French Cooperation and CANARI to bring additional support to the implementation of the Management Plan and the development of the physical infrastructures.

The activities of the SMMA are many, and include scientific research on the natural resources of the area, permanent monitoring of coral reefs, water quality and other environmental factors, public information and sensitization, provision of facilities for users; coordination of related economic activities, promotion of technologies that are appropriate and tied to local environmental, social and cultural conditions, and patrolling and enforcement of the rules and regulations. The rules and regulations of the SMMA include the following: fishing is reserved exclusively for registered fishermen of St. Lucia, the collection of marine organisms is prohibited; avoiding all contact with the reefs; and all forms of waste disposal are prohibited.

In 1997, the SMMA received well deserved international recognition by winning the British Airways Tourism for Tomorrow Special Award for National Parks and Protected Areas. Recently, the SMMA added an Education Officer to its staff to engage in public outreach efforts. Monitoring of the marine resources of the park has shown an increase in fish stocks in the SMMA in general and particularly in the Marine reserves of the SMMA.

3 *Local Economic Benefits* Adoption of improved natural resource management practices is more likely to occur if the activity generates economic benefits for local communities

The ENCORE project reflects the growing recognition among OECS countries of the inter-relationship between economic growth, environmental protection, and stakeholder participation in environment and development decision-making. While the development of economic benefits was not an explicit objective of the project, it was implicit in the project's goal of sound environmental management and many project activities are providing economic benefits for local residents. Activities like sustainable tourism, small-scale fishing, and sustainable agriculture are promising approaches that can provide environmentally sound economic benefits through employment, income generation, local participation and capacity building. Nature tourism activities and marine management areas supported by the ENCORE project are beginning to generate economic benefits for local communities, including employment as rangers, guides, and construction workers, as well as small business development, such as craft or souvenir shops.

Marine management areas like the SMMA provide important economic benefits to fishermen by securing their rights to fish in important areas, protecting breeding grounds, supporting alternative types of fishing, and promoting marine-based tourism activities. They also play an important role in facilitating collaborative management of the resource by diverse stakeholders, and in regulating tourist activities to ensure their sustainability.

THE ENCORE EXPERIENCE LESSONS LEARNED TO DATE

CONCLUSION

ENCORE has initiated or undertaken a large number of initiatives. Some like the Fishing Gear Improvement, SMMA, Strengthening of Pesticide Control Boards, Water Quality Monitoring, NGO Grants, CRMI, Basic Sanitation Facilities will have matured by the end of ENCORE, i.e. they will have had time to develop on their own and to take on their own momentum. Other activities such as working with the Fond Gens Libre community on developing the Gros Piton Nature Site, the establishment of CAMMA and the Marine Management Area for Cabrits National Park, will be ongoing. They are currently in various implementation stages. Additional care and nurturing will be required to carry them beyond the implementation of ENCORE workplans. Once the ENCORE Project terminates and the catalytic and facilitation role of ENCORE is no longer present, it will be up to host governments and institutions to secure other sources of funding to continue and sustain them.

Even in the cases of success stories like SMMA, PIRTGA, CRMI, or Water Quality Monitoring, many problems will still remain to be resolved and further work will have to be done to ensure that the environmental management objectives of these activities are sustained. In the case of SMMA, attention needs to be paid to the collection of fees to ensure financial sustainability, to the education of the public to build respect for the area, and to the enforcement of regulations to sustain the recovery of these ecosystems. In the case of PIRTGA, issues such as the overall status of the Indian River, discipline of the tour guides, financial management of the association, enforcement of the association by-laws and continued training in tour guiding will need special attention. Although the CRMI has evolved into the Coastal Resources Management Program and other resources have been mobilized to initiate the program, the bulk of the work still remains, i.e. valorization of the natural resources in economic development planning, institutionalization of environmental impact assessment, etc.

One of ENCORE's contributions to the sustainable management of the natural resources of the Eastern Caribbean region, could be the development of a practical Action Plan outlining the steps to be taken to ensure the successful continuation of these ENCORE-funded initiatives, when USAID funding support ends. One aspect of such an Action Plan should be a continued focus on disseminating successful results throughout the OECS region.

ENCORE has been involved in numerous community level environmental management activities ranging from basic sanitation to water quality monitoring, and from watershed management to Marine Management Area Development. Work done in one community may be of relevance to other communities with slight modification. For example, the methodologies and technologies to construct latrines in communities may be of relevance to other communities not only in St. Lucia and Dominica but in other OECS countries as well. Similarly, the experience of the development of the SMMA is of relevance to not only the CAMMA and the Marine Section of the Cabrits National Park, but to other coastal zone initiatives in the Eastern Caribbean region.